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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A workflow management device comprising:
a communications interface configured to receive a user request comprising one or more user-desired product properties associated with a user-desired product, the interface further configured to communicate with one or more workflow processing devices located external of the workflow management device;
a storage device configured to store predefined rules data for processing the user request;
and
processing circuitry configured to process the user request using the predefined rules data to produce a transformed user request without communicating with the one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed user request including additional information not present in the user request for automatically organizing workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties to achieve the user-desired product via the one or more workflow processing devices.
2. (Previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the transformed user request is received by a controller external to the workflow management device, the controller configured to control the workflow in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties.
3. (Previously presented) The device of claim 2, wherein the transformed request comprises additional information to process the user request in accordance with specifications of the user, and the additional information comprises information to route and process the workflow

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in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties, and information to prioritize processing of the workflow in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties.

4. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein the user request is received in a job definition format (JDF).

5. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein the interface is configured to receive the user request via the Internet.

6. (Previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the predefined rules data comprises instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

7. (Previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the processing circuitry is an extensible stylesheet language transformation (XSLT) processor.

8. (Previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the processing circuitry applies an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request to produce the transformed user request.

9. (Previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the predefined rules data is stored in at least one stylesheet within the storage device, and each stylesheet comprises instructions written in an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) format.

10-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) A workflow management system for managing workflow in a printing system, comprising:

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one or more workflow processing devices; and
a workflow management device located external of the one or more workflow processing devices comprising:

a communications interface configured to receive a user request, the interface further configured to communicate with the one or more workflow processing devices;

a storage device configured to store predefined rules data for processing the user request, the user request comprising one or more user-desired product properties; and

processing circuitry configured to process the user request using the predefined rules data to produce a transformed request without communicating with the one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed request comprising additional information not present in the user request for automatically organizing workflow through the system in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties to produce a user-desired product via the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the transformed request.

16. (Previously presented) The system of claim 15, further comprising:

a controller external to the workflow management device and the one or more workflow processing devices, the controller configured to receive the transformed request and route the transformed request among the one or more workflow processing devices for processing in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties using information from the transformed request.

17. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the user request is received in a job definition format (JDF).

18. (Previously presented) The system of claim 15, wherein the predefined rules data comprise instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

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19. (Previously presented) The system of claim 15, wherein the processing circuitry applies an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request to produce the transformed request.

20. (Currently amended) A workflow assignment method comprising:
receiving a user request at a server, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
providing in the server a prestored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
loading the predefined rules and the user request into a processing circuitry of the server, the circuitry configured to process the user request; and
without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, executing the predefined rules on the server to create a transformed user request, the transformed user request comprising additional information not present in the user request to automatically organize workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties to produce a user-desired product.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising:
sending the transformed user request to a controller communicatively coupled to the server; and
the controller controlling the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties using information from the transformed user request.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the receiving comprises receiving the user request in a job definition format (JDF).

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23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the providing comprises providing the stylesheet in an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) format having instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the receiving further comprises receiving the user request via the Internet.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the the executing is performed by an extensible stylesheet language transformation (XSLT) processor.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the creating the transformed user request comprises applying the predefined rules using an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request, and the transformed user request comprises a definition of workflow tasks to be performed, and settings and properties for the workflow tasks, configured to produce a user-desired product in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties.

27-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) A workflow assignment system comprising:
means for receiving a user request, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
means for providing a pre-stored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
means for loading the predefined rules and the user request into a processing means configured to process the user request; and

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means for executing the defined rules to create a transformed user request without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed user request comprising additional information not present in the user request to organize workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties to produce a user-desired product.

31. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture comprising:
processor-usable media embodying programming configured to cause a processing circuitry of a workflow management device to:

receive a user request, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
provide a prestored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
load the predefined rules and the user request into the processing circuitry, the circuitry configured to process the user request; and

without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, execute the predefined rules to create a transformed user request, the transformed user request comprising additional information not present in the user request to organize workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties to produce a user-desired product.

32. (Currently amended) The device of claim 9, wherein each of a plurality of stylesheets corresponds to a different subset of the product properties, and at least two of the plurality of stylesheets comprise instructions related to at least one same one of the workflow processing devices.

33. (Previously presented) The device of claim 32, wherein the transformed user request generated by a first one of the stylesheets has a different workflow than the transformed user request generated by a second one of the stylesheets.

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34. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein the additional information includes information for sequentially routing the workflow among a plurality of the workflow processing devices to achieve the user-desired product via the one or more workflow processing devices.

35. (New) The system of claim 15, wherein the additional information includes information for sequentially routing the workflow among a plurality of the workflow processing devices to achieve the user-desired product via the one or more workflow processing devices.

36. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the additional information includes information for sequentially routing the workflow among a plurality of the workflow processing devices to produce the user-desired product via the one or more workflow processing devices.

37. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the additional information includes information for sequentially routing the workflow among a plurality of the workflow processing devices to produce the user-desired product.

38. (New) The article of claim 31, wherein the additional information includes information for sequentially routing the workflow among a plurality of the workflow processing devices to produce the user-desired product.